

REMARKS

This paper is being presented in response to the Office Action dated September 8, 2005. At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-58 were pending in this patent application. The Office Action rejected claims 1-58.

By the foregoing amendments, claims 1-62 are now pending. Of these, claims 1, 24, 50 and 59 are independent. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

Brief Summary of the Claim Amendments

New independent claim 59 specifies a method for use in a process control system having a plurality of input/output (I/O) networks, where a plurality of unique identification tags is created for the plurality of I/O networks, respectively, and a transmission is sent over a selected I/O network of the plurality of I/O networks to identify a respective unique identification tag of the plurality of unique identification tags for the selected I/O network.

New claims 60-62 depend from claim 59 and, in turn, specify that the method may further include storing the respective unique identification tag in a process controller of the process control system, where the process controller is communicatively coupled to the selected I/O network to support implementation of one or more process control routines, that the transmission may be periodically broadcast on the selected I/O network, and that the transmission may be sent in response to a request for the transmission to identify the respective unique identification tag.

No new matter has been added by the foregoing amendments. Please see, e.g., page 3, lines 15-25, page 10, line 23 – page 11, line 8, and the claims of the application as originally filed.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)

Claims 1, 5-8, 10-15, 24-26, 29-32 and 35-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Tominaga, et. al., U.S. Patent No. 6,880,000 (“Tominaga”). Of these, claims 1 and 24 are independent. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and the assertions and determinations therein, for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 recites, in part, the steps of creating a first unique network identification tag for a first one of the I/O networks, and creating a second unique network identification tag for a second one of the I/O networks.

The Office Action argues that Tominaga’s description of splitting up a pool of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses among a plurality of servers and the use of Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) teaches each of the aforementioned steps of claim 1. See Office Action, p. 3; Tominaga, col. 3, lines 25-35, col. 4, lines 5-15, and col. 18, lines 25-30.

Applicants respectfully submit that Tominaga fails to disclose or suggest creating first or second unique network identification tags for first or second I/O networks, respectively, as required by claim 1. In short, claim 1 recites creating a network identification tag for an I/O network, not a particular device. Indeed, claim 1 separately recites devices communicatively coupled to the I/O network.

In contrast, the cited portion of Tominaga describes a technique for splitting up a pool of IP addresses across a plurality of servers. See Tominaga, col. 4, lines 5-15. More specifically, Tominaga indicates that “the address block are [*sic*] suitably split and allocated to the [route server] itself and lower order servers” (Tominaga, col. 4, lines 10-12). Splitting up a group of IP addresses in no way teaches or suggests “creating a first unique network identification tag for a first one of the I/O networks,” as required by claim 1.

A group of IP addresses allocated to a particular server also does not teach or suggest the aforementioned steps of claim 1 because a group of IP addresses in no way identifies the network. It follows that a *group of addresses* certainly does not constitute a unique network identification tag.

Other portions of Tominaga cited in the Office Action in connection with claim 1 describe assigning an IP address to a specific client and assigning a block of IP addresses to a server for use in managing a network. Please see, e.g., Tominaga, col. 3, lines 25-36, and col. 18, lines 20-39. However, an IP address assigned to a specific client device does not teach or suggest the creation of a network identification tag for a network, but rather an IP address assigned to a particular *device*.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that Tominaga fails to disclose or suggest creating a first unique network identification tag for a first one of the I/O networks, as required by claim 1. It follows that claim 1, and by implication, claims 5-8 and 10-15 dependent thereon, are allowable over Tominaga. Thus, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 1, 5-8, and 10-15.

Independent claim 24, and by implication, claims 25-26, 29-32 and 35-42 dependent thereon, are patentable over the cited reference for reasons analogous to those presented above in association with claim 1. Specifically, claim 24 similarly requires first and second unique network identification tags for first and second I/O networks, respectively. Moreover, claim 24 requires one or more process controllers, which are not disclosed or suggested in the IP address management techniques taught by Tominaga. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 24-26, 29-32 and 35-42.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 16-23 and 43-58 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Tominaga in view of Harvey, et. al., U.S. Patent No. 6,044,401 ("Harvey"). Of these, claim 50 is independent. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and the assertions and determinations therein, for at least the following reasons.

Claim 50 recites, in part, a first routine stored on the computer readable memory and adapted to be implemented on the processor to receive the network identification tag from a selected I/O network, and a second routine stored on the computer readable memory and adapted to be implemented on the processor to identify the selected I/O network based on the received network identification tag.

At the outset, it is noted that the rejection of claim 50 relies solely on Tominaga (and does not rely upon Harvey) with respect to the aforesaid elements of claim 50.

As discussed above in association with claim 1, Tominaga does not teach or suggest a network identification tag associated with an *I/O network*, insofar as Tominaga teaches an IP address associated with a specific *device*. It follows that Tominaga fails to disclose or suggest a routine to receive a network identification tag, or a routine to identify a selected *I/O network* based on the received network identification tag.

Harvey also fails to teach or suggest these elements of claim 50, nor is Harvey relied on by the Office Action with respect to these elements. In contrast, Harvey is directed to monitoring network activity and reporting information in accordance with user privilege level. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claim 50, and by implication, claims 51-58 dependent thereon, are allowable over Tominaga and Harvey. Thus, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 50-58.

Dependent claims 16-23 depend from independent claim 1, and dependent claims 43-49 depend from independent claim 24. Independent claims 1 and 24 have been shown above to be allowable for reasons, as described above, not addressed by the citations to Harvey. Because Harvey was cited for reasons other than to cure the above-noted deficiencies of the reference cited against claims 1 and 24, it is respectfully submitted that claims 16-23 and 43-49 recite patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of dependent claims 16-23 and 43-49.

Claims 2-4, 9, 27-28 and 33-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Tominaga in view of Alkhatib, et. al., U.S. Patent No. 6,532,217 ("Alkhatib"). Of these, none are independent. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and the assertions and determinations therein, for at least the following reasons.

Claims 2-4 and 9 depend from independent claim 1 and claims 27-28 and 33-34 depend from independent claim 24. Independent claims 1 and 24 have been shown above to be allowable for reasons, as described above, not addressed by the citations to Alkhatib. Because Alkhatib was cited for reasons other than to cure the above-

noted deficiencies of the reference cited against claims 1 and 24, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-4, 9, 27-28 and 33-34 recite patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of dependent claims 2-4, 9, 27-28 and 33-34.

New Claims 59-62 Recite Patentable Subject Matter

New claims 59-62 recite patentable subject matter over the cited references for at least the following reasons. Independent claim 59, and by implication, claims 60-62 dependent thereon, recite, in pertinent part, the step of sending *a transmission to identify* a respective unique identification tag for a selected I/O network. Applicants respectfully submit that the techniques described in the cited references using IP addresses fail to disclose or suggest this step.

In contrast, and as described in the Office Action at page 3, an IP address is sent every time a message is sent using TCP/IP. It follows therefore that such TCP/IP messages cannot be considered to constitute transmissions sent to identify an address, let alone a unique identification tag, as required by claims 59-62. Rather, such TCP/IP messages are sent for a purpose other than to identify an address or identification tag for the I/O network over which the transmission is sent. Indeed, there would be no need to send a transmission to identify an identification tag in such TCP/IP messaging because the TCP/IP protocol requires that the frame header of each message to contain an IP source address (Office Action, page 3). It is accordingly submitted that the cited references fail to disclose or suggest sending a transmission to identify a respective unique identification tag, much less a unique identification tag for the I/O network over which the transmission is sent.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 59-62 recite patentable subject matter over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have now made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for immediate allowance. For the foregoing reasons and for other reasons clearly

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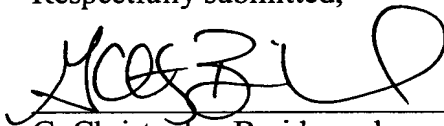
apparent, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-62.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 13-2855 of Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP. In addition, if a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) is necessary to maintain the pendency of this case and is not otherwise requested in this case, Applicants request that the Commissioner consider this paper to be a request for an appropriate extension of time and hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge the fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(a) corresponding to the needed extension of time to Deposit Account No. No. 13-2855 of Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP. A copy of this paper is enclosed herewith.

If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this application, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner call their attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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